AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A device for use in a vehicle for transmitting a drive force [[(F)]] from at least one first wheel to at least one second wheel with a hydrostatic transmission arrangement, the hydrostatic transmission arrangement comprising a hydrostatic pump, the first wheel and the hydrostatic pump being drivingly connected, a hydrostatic drive assembly connected to the pump by a hydrostatic line system, the hydrostatic drive assembly being drivingly connected to the second wheel, and ~~one or more members~~ a bridging duct positioned along the hydrostatic line system, the bridging duct connected to the remainder of the hydrostatic line system to divert at least a portion of a flow from flowing through the hydrostatic drive assembly, a unit arranged in the bridging duct and provided with temperature-sensitive members that connect and disconnect the bridging duct in proportion to a temperature of a fluid contained in the hydrostatic drive assembly ~~the one or more members being adapted~~ to wholly or partially bridge or disconnect or reconnect the hydrostatic drive assembly.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim [[2]]1, wherein the temperature-sensitive members comprise bodies having different thermal expansion coefficients, and the connecting and disconnecting members are arranged so as to be actuated by relative movements between the bodies.

4. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 3, wherein the temperature-sensitive members comprise a first body comprising a fluid and a second body made of metal and the connecting and disconnecting members comprise a cone or needle adapted to be actuated by the first body, and a seat associated with the cone or needle.

5. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~arrangement~~ unit comprises a regulator adapted to produce a continuous or step-by-step variation in a medium moving through the hydrostatic line system.

6. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~control valve~~ unit comprises a regulating valve adapted to regulate a flow characteristic selected from the group consisting of pressure and flow, and the regulating valve being controlled by a member

selected from the group consisting of ~~comprising~~ an electric member, a mechanical member or a temperature-detecting member.

7. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 4, wherein at least one of the first body and the second body is chosen with thermal expansion coefficients, and the cone and the seat are positioned, to allow connections and disconnections within a temperature range between about 80 and about 105°C.

8. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 1 in combination with a vehicle in which the wheels normally make contact with the ground, the bridging duct ~~bridge member~~ causing a change of less than about 3% in a medium flow produced by the hydrostatic pump and about a 1% drop in pressure.

9. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, characterized in that a delay in the bridging or disconnection and reconnection is between about 0.1-0.2 seconds.

10. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 1, characterized in that a first value is associated with a first state of vehicle operation and a second value is associated with a second state of vehicle operation, the first and second values being used in bridging or disconnection and reconnection and the second state being a return to normal operation of the vehicle after a temporary change to the first state.

11. (New) A device for use in a vehicle for transmitting a drive force from at least a first wheel to at least a second wheel with a hydrostatic transmission arrangement, the hydrostatic transmission comprising a hydrostatic pump, the hydrostatic pump being connected to rotate with the first wheel, the hydrostatic transmission further comprising a hydrostatic drive assembly, the hydrostatic drive assembly being connected to rotate with the second wheel, the hydrostatic pump being connected to the hydrostatic drive assembly by a high pressure line and a low pressure line, a pressure relief valve connecting the high pressure line and the low pressure line, the pressure relief valve acting to limit a maximum pressure in the high pressure line, a bridging duct also extending between the high pressure line and the low pressure line and being positioned to bypass a portion of a flow around the hydrostatic drive assembly, a variable flow controller being positioned within the bridging duct, the variable flow controller responsive to changes in a sensed characteristic in the hydrostatic transmission and bypassing a portion of the flow through

the bridging duct in proportion to changes to the sensed characteristic in the hydrostatic transmission.

12. (New) The device of Claim 11, wherein the sensed characteristic is temperature of a fluid in the hydrostatic transmission arrangement.

13. (New) The device of Claim 12, wherein the variable flow controller comprises a thermostat.

14. (New) The device of Claim 13, wherein the thermostat comprises an axially movable component and a seat, the axially movable component moving away from the seat to increase flow through the bridging duct as the temperature of the fluid increases in the hydrostatic transmission arrangement.

15. (New) The device of Claim 14, wherein the thermostat comprises a sleeve defining at least a portion of a recess, the recess containing an actuating fluid, the sleeve defining at least a portion of the recess and the actuating fluid having thermal expansion coefficients that differ such that the actuating fluid expands more quickly than the recess as the temperature of the fluid in the hydrostatic transmission arrangement increases.

16. (New) The device of Claim 11, wherein the variable flow controller is controlled by an electric member, a mechanical member or a temperature detecting member.

17. (New) The device of Claim 11, wherein the variable flow controller diverts a maximum of less than about 3% of the flow through the hydrostatic drive assembly.

18. (New) The device of Claim 11, wherein the variable flow controller diverts sufficient flow to cause a maximum of less than about 1% pressure drop in the high pressure line.

19. (New) The device of Claim 11, wherein the high pressure line and the low pressure line extend through a single body and the bridging duct extends between portions of the high pressure line and the low pressure line that are contained within the single body.

20. (New) The device of Claim 19, wherein the variable flow controller also is contained within the single body.

21. (New) The device of Claim 19, wherein the single body comprises at least a portion of the hydrostatic drive assembly.